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of him from whom it had dropped. The same belief in the identification of the essence of one's being with any part of one's body which actuates so many primitive peoples, and is so characteristic of West Africa, exists among the Bush Negroes. It is for this reason that when an African or a Bush Negro dies away from home some of his hair and nail parings are sent to his native village for ceremonial burial. And it is for this reason, too, that for three mornings we saw the party of five young men go out from Gankwe to dig the grave of Sedefo's brother and heard the drum's invocation,

Orio tintin
Orio he'e dyo.

2

The night was still and dark. The natives said the moon was dead and this was the time for the dances to the river gods, but since there was a death in Gankwe all the gods might be danced to, for in times of important rituals, like death or the breaking of mourning or harvest festivals, it was not necessary to wait for the day sacred to each god to dance.

"They dance well at Gankwe," said our informant, as he sat by, and then after listening for a few moments he added, "They're dancing already."

We, too, walked out on the path to listen, and gradually we separated the sound of the falls above our camp from what seemed like the pulse of the night itself.

"It doesn't boom, does it?" we asked each other, remembering the accounts of impressionable travelers.

Soon Sedefo himself appeared and another, and we started for Gankwe.

"*Waka koni*, Sedefo," called our host at camp as we put off. He was evidently uneasy about us and asked the paddlers to be careful, for it is not safe on the river at night with the rapids below and the spirits that hover about.

The paddles cut the water so spiritlessly that it did seem as if the spirits were carrying the boat downstream.

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if it was smaller still it would plague the members of the family with sickness, or bad luck, or it might make them poor and send all kinds of trouble to them. 996

"Kunu," he went on, "attacks the family of the offender, but almost never the person who has done the evil thing himself. That would be too easy. If I wanted very much to do something I should not do, then I might be willing to take death in the end. But to punish my whole family until it is ended—that is too much."

"But what is kunu?" we asked.

"Kunu is a spirit. We dance to it and serve it with offerings. It is not the same in every village, but in our village we dance kunu in this way. If we dance it during the next moon, then we dance one day only, and two months later we dance kunu again. Then we wait eleven months and dance again. We do this every year in the same way." 996 782 796

"Is this enough to keep kunu away? Would it not be better to dance more often?"

"It would do no good at all to dance kunu more often. The spirits would only be angry if they were disturbed all the time. If you have kunu, you have it," we heard again.

But why, we asked, were not people careful? Why, if they knew that kunu was hard, did they not walk more softly still, so that they might avoid this trouble?

"Ma, kye! There are always things happening, people always do things they shouldn't."

"Then life is hard for you Saramacca people," we said. "You must always think of kunu."

Our seriousness amused him. It was, after all, this way with kunu. When you had it, you did what you could. If a wrong was done, then it had to be paid for. But the Bakra should not think that the Saramacca people weren't happy. There were good spirits, too. While some spirits punish, others protect. 996

"Have you seen our women dance, Bakra? A Saramacca woman's foot can do things, mati. Have you seen them dance bandamba? Have you seen them *chaka*—shake?" he said, laughing, and turning to the men about him, he added, "We will show them how our women dance—and our men!" 535

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be possessed by them. Between the roots of the tree offerings were placed—two or three bottles on their sides, or a calabash filled with sacred clay.

When the time came to dance to the gods of the kankan tree, a tunic of cotton was placed about its trunk. While the drums spoke to the gods, white clay was spread over the bark, a chicken was killed, and its blood allowed to spray the tree and drip into a calabash placed on the ground to receive it. Eggs inside obia pots were put beside the tree, and bottles filled with sweet liquor and the juice of sugar cane. All about its wide trunk the dancers swayed and leaped, each dancing to her own spirit until, at the height of their ecstasy, there were a few among them who would climb the great tree itself, and dance on its branches. The drums continued until the frenzy ebbed. Had they stopped sooner, those in the tree could not have remained there safely or in safety have descended to the ground.

At other times, women came to Gedeonsu to ask him for children, and those who were troubled by his spirit brought offerings, though the great dances were held when the old year came to an end, and the big offerings were then made.

"If a man were to cut down a kankan tree, Gedeonsu would cut off his foot. I myself saw it happen," said a man to us at S'ei. "And his sister got the god."

The kankan tree gods could be bought, too. A woman who wanted fertility would seek to buy Gedeonsu. Others might wish to have Tinné. Only an individual who had a spirit which gave him the right to make obias and call the gods could get the spirit for one who wished to buy it. Such a man would take an obia pot, fill it with water and place inside it cowrie shells which had not been cleansed. After speaking his invocation, he would add a sacred white stone, called an obia stone, and with a calabash in one hand and a bell in the other, he would go to the tree and address the spirits as he rang the bell. When the water became ruffled, it was a sign that the god had entered it. Quickly he would cover the calabash with a cloth and take it away with him.

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This ritual might have brought Gedeonsu, or Tinné—whoever was called. The two could not, however, be taken at the same time, for one of them had to be left to care for the child Dyombie. If two of the kankan tree gods were wanted, then mother and child, or father and child, would be sought.

"The kankan tree spirits are not bad, but people fear them. They are not as bad as the Akatasi gods."

The Akatasi gods were those which animated the kato liana, and were related to the gods of the ant hill. This kato bush was a terrible parasite which, getting its strangle hold on a tree, would rise higher than the tree itself and at last kill it.

The silk-cotton, however, was a friendly tree and cruel only when its spirits were tampered with by those who did not know how to control the gods. When the ancestors came into this river, which "in early days was only a creek," it was they who had sought out these trees, and had made their villages where they stood. Now the trees had become great, and the villages were great.

Here was the silk-cotton tree at S'ei, one of the greatest of all. Its roots made ridges in the path to the village. Under the spiritual guard they spread, and to the large oval of wood fixed on a wooden base which stood a short distance from it, and to the low shelter where, on the head of a crudely carved image, rested a whitened covered pot, and farther to the mound of earth on which stood offerings. Farther still the roots followed the path, and into the village itself, until, perhaps half a mile from the tree, they reached the Kromanti house and the village council house and the home of the chief. It was as though these roots were the arteries which fed strength to the Kromanti spirits dwelling there, and as if they brought the wisdom of the ancestors to the shelter where the men of the village gathered to hear and try cases, to discuss the will of men and gods as they touched upon the well-being of the people.

Upon our arrival we were bidden to the council house, where men and women were waiting about. This was an

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834 848 "Don't go off into the bush with a man. A child born to you will have a bad bush god, if you do," she added as an afterthought.

5

123 179 In the other corner, Chief And'u, the basia, and about half a dozen men were talking of the great book about their ancestors which the white man had.

"It is large so," said the chief to one of the older men, indicating an imaginary size which multiplied the size of the actual volume at least tenfold. "And people say it has in it pictures of the Apuku gods, small as we ourselves know them, and a picture of the evil Apuku who appear as fire in the distance. . . . Mati, white men have gone into the Kromanti houses in the country of our ancestors and have made pictures!"

"It is impossible!"

"I want to see!"

The old man said, "I will not look. Books are not for us, mati."

"But mati, the G'aman has heard, and he wants to see."

The old man shook his head. He would have nothing of pictures that figured what should never have been allowed to be photographed.

It seemed prudent to give the conversation a new turn. 137 Down river, the men had said that a man of this village had lately found a new *sɔkɔ* liana. Was it so?

"The man who found it was my son," said the old man, "you should have come for the dance. You would have seen how we do things here in the bush. But pictures you could [882] not take. No, mati, if you photograph, you take the soul."

924 The festivities for the find had been especially joyful, he explained, for the boy had only recently come by his gods, and this had been yet another proof that he would serve his family capably. For though the find was his own, all [918] his relatives in the mother's line would enjoy its use. Here- [926] after, when the poison of its leaves and its slender branches

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was wanted for killing fish in a creek, they would have their own neku.

When a man found a neku vine, he first had to cut some of it, and bring it home with him. Then he sent word to all the men of his village to come and carry the branches of the neku to the place of ceremony. He named the place and day for the pounding of the neku. The invitation was given in the name of the old men of the village, and the headman sent his bassias, those men who assist him in village affairs, with messages to neighboring settlements. When this had been done, the finder of the vine appointed five or six men of his own choice, and these were called "Bassias of Neku." It was they who had charge of the ceremonies. The night preceding the dance these men went about crying, "Tomorrow we will have neku. All must come." Again the men went to the bush where the neku vine had been found, and brought to the village some more of the vine for pounding.

Early the following morning a horn was sounded, and the men from the neighboring villages who had come for the festivities also went and cut some of the neku, and brought it to the pounding place. When the men were gathered, each took up a stick and pounded the neku. And what they crushed they put into corials filled with water. These corials were then sunk in the stream. In a short time the poisoned fish floated to the surface of the water, and all the men took up their long-handled scoops and began to fish. The bassias of neku, whom the finder of the plant had appointed for the ceremony, directed the fishing. When a quantity of fish had been caught, those who were not of the village where the owner of the vine lived gave of their catch to the finder of the neku plant, and some went to the chief of the village, and the elders, too, had a share of what the outsiders had caught, though in some villages only the owner of the vine profited by the gifts of the others. Then the men joined the women, who were dressed in their finest cloths, and the dancing began.

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Later, through the gathering darkness, the people of the neighboring villages went home, paddling their boats which were loaded down with the fish that had been netted. And from this time on, everyone knew that this neku vine was the property of him who had found it, and of his family, down through his mother's line, forever.

"Ai, mati, you would have seen something, if you had got here for the neku dance!"

6

Like any other Bush Negro village, S'ei was a series of sandy clearings about which were grouped huts of woven palm fronds and palm thatch. All about was the big bush. The trails which led from the village were each guarded by a magically treated palm azang, and shrines to the ancestral spirits who saw to it that evil was kept away. Where the several paths led, a stranger was not encouraged to discover. Down one, women were to be seen disappearing in the morning with trays on their heads, their infants astride their backs, held inside the folds of a cloth which was fastened high above their breasts, and caught up again below them. In many upper river villages, this path led to the fields, some distance away. Others were the way to shrines, erected to those spirits which must be worshiped outside the village. Another path might lead to a brook, which the villagers held sacred. There were trails, too, which connected neighboring villages, and led perhaps farther yet, but for the stranger, the highway was the river, and no matter how short the distance between one settlement and another, he was not invited to make his way through the bush.

"You do not want to go through the bush, white man. In the bush are evil spirits," we heard many times.

A village clearing was divided into quarters. Each quarter was inhabited by one of the *mbe*, or extended families, and the quarter bore its name. It was composed of several households—five or six or more, depending upon the size of the

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[774] at the time approaching a state of possession, had provoked great anger.

"If you do not know what the Dyo-dyo is, then you are not human. Then I won't talk to you. Have you never walked and felt something in back of you, yet nothing was there? Have you never had a dream?"

The Dyo-dyo was one of two souls with which each individual was born, the old woman had later been persuaded to explain, for each man had his akra, his personal soul, which if he were mindful of it, remained with him, and allowed no evil to come to him; and each man had his Dyo-dyo, his wandering soul. At death the soul which had [795] wandered came back to the body. If it were permitted to stray once more, this soul, which had been ever restless in life, would wander about troubling the living.

[796 765] But now, sitting among the women in back of the Granman's shrine, it seemed again best to admit that she knew nothing of the adyo ceremony. Fortunately, there was no outburst of anger this time, for here in the true, true Saramacca country, it was soon evident that there was a [184] pride in their magic, and their language, because these were held to be uniquely their own.

"We give a big play for the breaking of mourning." All [534] the drums were played, and the rattles sounded, and the *kwakwa*—the hard-wood bench played with two sticks—was beaten.

[293] For this important ceremony, the oldest living brother of the dead man provided food and rum, and, when the time came to partake of this food, he and the *kri mundu*—the people of rank—sat about the doorway of the widow's house. She herself stood inside the house, behind the threshold, scattering food for the dead, and pouring rum on the [548] ground. Rice and peanuts and sugar cane were thrown away, but not yams or plantains, for those things were not given in their village to the ancestral spirits. As the widow "threw away" the food she wept. In the clearing those who did not eat danced adyo. In a circle, men and women danced in close file, one behind the other, each

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holding a stick the size of a well-grown boy's arm. Round and round they went, as the widow from her doorway moaned her lament, and guns sounded in honor of the dead. The more important the man, the more guns were fired. Their own men had been the Granman's brothers. There was shooting till . . . till late afternoon, when they could not delay the bathing at the river any longer.

Before dark, all had to go to the river to bathe, and the widow, too, was led there with the others. There she purified herself, and discarded her mourning clothes, drawing on new cloths, and making herself fit with ornaments for the ceremony of rejoicing. This was followed by dancing which lasted late into the night. All the gods might be danced to at an adyo ceremony—Adonko; Vodu, the snake; Opete, the buzzard; Tigri, the jaguar; and all the gods of the bush and the ant hill—and, at the beginning, the seketi social dances and the half-sacred awasa. These dances were held for the spirits of men and women alike, and it did not matter whether the dead, or the living members of the family of the dead, shared these gods with the rest of the villagers, or not.

"But mourning is not over yet," said Fenekonde.

Seven months more elapsed, she showed on her fingers, before a woman might cohabit with her brother-in-law. If there was no brother-in-law to take her, then a woman had to wait twelve months after the adyo ceremony, instead of seven.

"If a woman doesn't care for her brother-in-law," continued Fenekonde, "or he doesn't care for her, then, when the seven months have passed, he comes to her hammock for two nights. Then she can go to another man at once."

When the husband who had died left no brothers, and there was no one else in his family to take the widow, the family of the dead man sought out a husband for her.

"They look and they look, until they are weary," said the Granman's younger wife, "but a man must be found before a woman can come out of mourning."

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"Perhaps the women were wrong. She may not be a woman yet."

"*Ma kyvl*" Angita exclaimed. It seemed he knew better.

And there was the woman Amasina. She wore as many armlets and anklets of brass as the shy dancer, as many as the wife of the bassia of S'ei, whom the gods had prospered. Her cloths were of the finest, and in colors which were most often of yellow and blue stripes, with a thread of black interwoven, and another of twisted red and white. She was good-looking, but in her manner there was no smoldering challenge and no undue reserve. With ease she went from one group to another, and the women treated her neither with too much familiarity nor with restraint.

Amasina felt at ease, too, with the white people. In the bush they had an explanation for this feeling of well-being with strangers. If a man and a woman were both born on the same day, they did not get on very well together, for they were both apt to have the same powers to grasp things which came within the province of the gods who also had come into the world on that day. Such a man and woman would at once perceive each other's mistakes or would be given to speaking continual warnings to each other. But there were days which were especially congenial affinities for marriages, and even friendships. These, we were led to see, were days which represented a male and female deity in the Bush Negro pantheon, whose mating had brought well-being to themselves and the living world.

"You and Amasina like each other, ai," they said in the village, and this friendship had a sequel of importance for us.

One late afternoon we were sitting with the women talking about the gods. Dida said the white on her body was for her god Kesekia. Chief And'u had washed her for her god when he was here in the village, and tomorrow she would dance. Kesekia, she said, was a Vodu god, who had come to her from the French shore. When he came to her, he spoke tongues; he knew French.

"Tomorrow they will play the agida drum, and I will put a kerchief on my head tied so," she said, showing how she

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would fasten it in back, letting the ends hang down, "and I will tie my breasts with another." She took a proffered kerchief, folded it into a triangle, and from the back brought the ends between her breasts and knotted them twice.

Amasina now joined us, and stood by listening.

They danced for Vodu gods on Sunday and Monday, and for the spirits of the bush on Tuesday and Wednesday. All the obia dances were held on Friday. All spirits had their special days, when they were worshiped and when they manifested themselves.

As we talked, each woman showed on her fingers how many gods she had. Dida had two other Vodu gods. Three fingers, two, three, four—hands went up with pride, but what the names of the gods were, they would not say, for if they called the gods, they would come. It was well enough for Dida to talk, for having the god it was not she who was speaking, but the god himself. Very possibly he was deciding to come to the white woman, for that was what gods did if they chose. Intermingled with this banter was some concern for their visitor if the god should decide to come to her.

Faced with the opportunity of coming by a spirit, the visitor asked to be made wise in the ways of the gods. What was the name of the Earth Mother? And the Mother of the River? And of that very important snake god called Papa who came to women only, because only women gave birth to children?

Amasina, who had seated herself beside the white woman, leaned over, and calmly spoke.

"I will tell you. The Earth Mother is Asaase, and Hene Tonugbwe is the name of the Mother of the River, and Towenu is the Papa god. Now do not ask more, and never speak these names to any one, unless you get the god."

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the space where the snake was modeled, but never touching it.

The man who was explaining the bench to us pointed once more to the snake. "It is not always lifeless as you see it here," he said.

When the snake came to life, trouble was brewing. It turned red, the color of blood, and all who came into the Kromanti house and saw it were warned of danger.

"How does the snake know when to come to life?"

"It is Agbo, the guard, who tells the snake. When she tells him there is trouble, he turns red, and then we know."

Immunity as well as knowledge was afforded by the magical powers of this stool and its snake and the Kromanti Mama.

"A man who has Kromanti sits down on the stool, and puts Agbo on his head, and when he has done that, nothing can harm him."

Thus is safety attained. But this only comes if the image has been propitiated by the Kromanti men. Rum, not of the sweet kind, must be offered it and prayers transmitted to its spirit on the drum which Kromanti recognizes—the apinti. If this is done, the Kromanti Mama will not lose its power, and the snake will continue to turn the warning color when danger threatens, and the bench will give protection to the men who have the Kromanti obia.

4

Not long after we had entered the bush we saw our first Kromanti dance. The people of several neighboring villages came to our base camp to dance for us. They asked, "Will you be afraid if the dancing brings Kromanti?" We told them we should welcome whatever spirits came.

Late that afternoon canoes brought people to our encampment for the festivities. Some, with an eye to trade, had brought carvings and obias, and, as we sat and talked with them about what should be given for the pieces they offered us, we could watch the dance outside our open hut.

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"OBIA COMES!"

Two boys, each armed with two sticks, were striking the flat top of a wooden bench called the *kwakwa*. There were other rhythms than the steady beat made by the concerted impact of the four sticks on the bench, but this set the time for the hand clapping and songs that accompanied the dances.

The young girls began the dancing. They were showing how well they could dance bandamba, and pair by pair they would take up the dance, the older women standing by, singing and watching closely to see how they controlled the muscles of their buttocks. When one girl showed clearly that she outdid her partner, we could see an old woman step between the dancing couples and put her arm about the shoulders of the better dancer, congratulating her with the crooning syllables, "Adoo! Adoo!"

As we went outside our hut, watching and joining in the applause, more and more people came up from the river, and among them were some older boys carrying drums. These were not the regular drummers, but an evening is long, and the sun had not yet set. This was the time for the younger boys to gain practice in drumming the intricate rhythms of the dances.

The drumheads tightened to give the proper tones, the boys began to play, and, with the kwakwa, swung into rhythms of the seketi. We had already seen it at Gankwe when they danced for the dead man, but there were always new words to these popular tunes, and these words were often diverting.

Slowly the sun set, slowly the dusk came on. The singing and dancing, the drumming and hand clapping continued without intermission, as people came up the path from the river bank. These late comers were almost all men. Some of them we had seen at the Gankwe funeral, and we knew we were to see good dancing. One by one, the boys at the drums were replaced by men, and at intervals one or the other of the three players gave up his place to a newcomer who, by his manner of testing the tightness of the drumhead and the increasing minuteness of the adjustments he made

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79% in the corda, was recognizable as a more able musician, a more experienced drummer.

Now the beat changed once more, and there were no more young dancers to be seen. They were dancing awasa, preparing for the spirits to come, so that during the long preparation the fury with which obia would burst upon them would be eased. In this awasa dance, the dancers patterned the massed movements after the solo and response of the song to which the dance was carried on.

Our paddler, Angita, acted as soloist against a chorus of [534] women. The seed rattles on his ankles clashed at the proper intervals of the music, adding a new sound to the combined notes of the drums and the monotonous pounding of the kwakwa. Forward he danced as he sang his solo, and the line of women opposite him retreated as he advanced. Then, as they sang the refrain, he danced backwards, as the women came closer toward him.

His rhythmic control surpassed any dancing we had seen on the river—never since have we seen a dancer who exhibited such perfect coordination of feet and muscles of the body as did Angita. This time there was no interruption, for he danced on until, voluntarily relinquishing his place, it was taken by another man, taller and more lean, who began a new awasa refrain, as he continued the dance. Occasionally a woman, brass on her wrists and at ankles, stepped from the line of women, and the dance became a wooing, the man advancing, the woman retreating, luring him on.

A new note sounded in the drums. In front of the hut where we were sitting, the drumming beat upon our ears with the persistence of the flaying tropical rain. This new note soon superseded the other. Obia was being called by the drummers—and obia came.

The light of the crescent moon threw into paler shadow the oil lamps in the clearing. Overhead, screening the starlit sky, branches hung from the trees of the big bush. Our cook came up with our sun helmets.

"What are these for?"

"OBIA COMES!"

"Put them on. See the moon? You will catch fresh colds if you sit in the moonlight with your heads uncovered."

So with sun helmets on our heads we sat, and, as we listened to the new rhythms of the drums, there came a shriek from the river which brought us to our feet. Those who were not dancing ran up the hill away from the drums.

"Obia! Obia comes! It is the Kromanti!" were the cries, and our cook and our town man placed themselves in line across the front of our hut, watching uneasily.

"They will destroy all you have if they get inside," they called to us, "we must try to keep them out."

Up from the river, along the path he had trodden but a while before, came a man whom we could not recognize in the disguise given him by the paint on his face. Half his face was white, half a deep red, and we later learned what we did not then know, that this was the face marking of the Djadja Kromanti and that this man was possessed by one of the two Kromanti spirits which carry danger to those who are present when the seizure comes. He advanced toward the drums, machete in hand, as though he were stalking his prey, his legs raised high at every step, trailing some enemy. At his mouth the foam was gathering, and the words he uttered were in the Kromanti tongo, the sacred speech not understood by the uninitiated.

The songs changed in character, and the singers were men. The women who had not run away were dancing a quick accompaniment to the drum beats, adding their shrill voices to the singing and the intensity of the cries of the possessed man. When the possessed man reached the hut, he stopped in front of the drummers. As their rhythms poured out of the barrel-like drums, he answered stroke for stroke with shouted cries in his sacred secret language, raising his machete higher and higher, until, with a quick stroke, he slashed at two of the players who were seated side by side on a log. He missed them by what seemed a hair's breadth as his machete, whistling through the narrow space between their bodies, sank deep into the log on which they sat.

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Other cries now came to us, and from the bush a second possessed man burst into the clearing. He, too, had a machete, and he made straight for our hut. But obia did not prompt him to insist on entering, and he came close to us, gibbering in our faces, and then, stepping high as had the other, went his way to slash at our washbasins, sending one of them, that we treasure as a memory of that night's adventure, hurtling into the bush with a deep dent in its side.

From the river came renewed shouts, and some of the men dashed to the bank to jump into a canoe and paddle into the rapids, so that they might watch the possessed man who had leaped into the river to pit his strength against the fast water. On and on he swam upstream in the foaming water, as from the bank we watched his progress uneasily in the clear light of the moon. Finally obia left him, and the men in the boat seized his inert form and brought him back to shore.

When we returned to our hut, we found several others possessed. Obia had claimed six or seven, some with faces painted half white, half red, as was that of the first man, others with faces whitened, while still others had white faces with black markings. These last had Tigri, and the white was for Opete. Those who danced for the buzzard had no machetes, but went about in a circle, moving with bodies bent forward from their waists and with arms thrown back in imitation of the bird from which their spirit took its name.

One man with the Tigri face-painting took away the apinti from the drummer and placing it in the center of the clearing leaned over it and began drumming faster rhythms. Now indeed obia itself was drumming.

Long before this, we had observed the amenities of the occasion. As hosts, our duty was to provide the ceremonial rum with which the spirits needed to be regaled, and our cook, holding the bottle of rum for us, filled and refilled the small glass which we offered to men and women. Some did not drink at all but poured part of the rum on the

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ground, rubbing the remainder over arms and upper body. Some took a sip and, like the others, poured the rest as a libation to the Earth Mother. Few drank more than a little, and only the men had as much as half of the small wine glass we were using.

The bassia of Gankwe came to us. "Do not be afraid. Obia has come strong, but we have prepared for it. The men will not hurt people."

Led by him, we passed from one dancer to the next, giving to this one a sip, to that one a taste. But there was one elderly man who would not drink.

"Not until I get obia," he said, "and obia does not come to me tonight."

Not all the possessed men were slashing about with cutlasses. One man pulled up grass, eating part and throwing the rest over his head. Another in the strength of his possession uprooted large clumps of brush, and one broke off a liana of some size and wrapped it about his body, and danced with it.

Songs, dancing men, dancing women, machetes flashing in the moonlight . . . and over all the beat of the drum. This was the dance of the Kromanti obia.

Now the man who had refused a drink came up. He was trembling.

"Obia comes!" he cried. "Give me rum!"

As he tossed off the drink, he dashed toward the possessed men. In his hand was a rattle, the first we had seen at this dance. The rattle is sacred to the Kromanti, and possession can be brought on by shaking it even when there are no drums. As he danced, he supplemented the rhythm of the drums with his rattle, and his dancing surpassed in its fury that of all the others. Men kept out of his way as he dashed back and forth in his contortions, and he continued his gyrations as those with painted faces, whom obia was releasing, began to feel exhaustion.

The drums never stopped. As long as obia remained unsatisfied, they would need to play on and on. While the drummers beat the Kromanti rhythms, and the man with

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[illegible] Bush Negroes [illegible]
Saramacca

his rattle danced his dance, the moon sank behind the screen of branches.

It was late. Slowly the last dancer came out of his orgy of possession. One by one the drums stopped until, for a moment, all was quiet. Then, taking the apinti drum up the path beyond our clearing, one of the drummers drummed an invocation to the spirits that had come.

We trained our flashlights on the path which led to the river, lighting the way of the dancers to their waiting boats, while they sang for us the seketi song we had heard the night of Zimbi's funeral.

Thank you, thank you, white men,
For coming to the Saramacca River,
For bringing us your diamond fire,
To light the darkness of our path.

5

At the village opposite our base camp, a girl had died shortly before our return from up river. The eighth night after the death was to be commemorated with the usual dancing of "eighth-day night," and with the ceremony of throwing away food for the spirit of the dead.

"Come tonight and we will dance for you," the men of the village said. It was agreed that they should come for us when they were through with the ceremony for throwing away the food, for the bereaved family would not look kindly upon the intrusion of the whites at the ceremony.

As we waited for the messenger, Bayo prowled about uneasily. He had been nervous for the past few days. His spirits had been troubling him, and he said he needed to dance. It was some time since he had danced, and his spirits were vexed with him for this neglect.

"If they dance Kromanti, I will dance, too," he said.

We talked with him of the rum we would have to take. The strength in which it was distilled made it necessary to cut it with water. Bayo watched us as we took out one bottle, prepared the rum, and then took up another. His hand interposed.

"OBIA COMES!"

"Do not take too much rum," he said. "When there is much to drink, obia does not come."

The bottle ready, we waited. Eight, half-past, nine o'clock. When we had decided they were not coming for us, the sharp bark of Troes signaled the approach of a man up the path from the river bank. As he came into the circle of light, we recognized Apanto.

"Everything is ready, Bak'a," he said. "Come."

It was not an important village, this one across the river from our camp. It was smaller and had much less power than Gankwe, the seat of a clan head. But enough men had assembled for the ceremonies to make a dance, and the women were standing about waiting as we came from the river through the palm-frond guard. The moon was again up, but moving clouds hid it from view or covered it with a haze which dimmed its brilliance. A few houses fronted on the little clearing where the dance was to be held, and here and there some oil lanterns had been placed.

Not everything, we soon learned, was ready, for drums were lacking. They had an agida, but the two others which were needed were not there. Poor villages very often had to borrow their drums from other settlements. The dancers stood about waiting.

We offered the tumao we had acquired, and Bayo returned to our camp for it. A large tin basin, turned upside down, gave the same metallic tenor voice as the apinti, and so with the makeshift orchestra the dancing began, two younger boys playing the kwakwa.

For a time it seemed as though we were only to see seketi. The children had had no opportunity at all to perform, and they stood about watching, while their elders danced the social dance we had seen so often. There was a tall man from a friendly village farther down the river whose dancing that night stood out. The careful awkwardness of his legs as he danced facing us, the carefully timed movements of arms and body showed us that in seketi, too, as the proverb ran, there were truly men on the lower river, as there were on the upper.

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[illegible] Bush Negroes [illegible]
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A light rain fell, and for a while the dancing stopped. Deserting our benches, we joined the natives who clustered under the overhanging eaves of the houses, and sheltered ourselves from the shower. But the rain was soon over, and the moon came out again. The drummers took their places and the dancers resumed their seketi.

"Dance Kromanti," we urged, remembering Bayo, "we have seen much seketi."

"You will have to look out," said Apanto. "We have strong Kromanti here," as the drums began to call obia.

Bayo had been sitting behind us during the seketi. His face mirrored a frame of mind that was none too happy, for this was not the sort of dance that he had looked forward to. When Apanto gave the word to play Kromanti, however, Bayo rose, and when we next saw him, his head was low over the inverted tin basin which served for an apinti, and he was making the night throb with the intricacy of the messages he was sending to the strong spirits which were troubling him with their insistence for expression.

Where we sat, we could see the men becoming aware of the voices of the drums. Several rattles had made their appearance, and the sound they made as they were shaken in concert caused the men's bodies to grow rigid, while the women hovered uncertainly about. By now the evening's "play" was begun in earnest. No children remained to look on. At the moment, there was no dancing, for the men with the rattles, and those who were merely waiting for the spirit to come to them, moved about in the open place reserved for the dance, back and forth, waiting for their Kromanti spirits to enter their bodies. One man struck up a song, and the chorus carried the refrain, until interest in that song died down and another was sung.

These Kromanti songs were not of the lilting, rhythmic kind which other dances required. Some of them were slow and mournful, some quick and martial. Now they were singing to the Opete. The leader sang

"OBIA COMES!"

Opete kwari Adjaisi-e
Opete kwari Adjaisi-obia-e
Opete kwari
Tido Adjaisi-e weti kwae, kwae, kwae, kwae.

The chorus repeated,

Opete kwaee, Adjaisi-e-yi
Opete kwaee, Adjaisi-e-ye
Opete kwaee, Adjaisi-e-kwaee!

They were becoming more and more agitated. The rattles sounded a faster tempo, the drums beat louder, and the music swung into another song.

Amanu Djadja-e
O-e-e-e-e-e
Amanu Djadja-e
O ye-e-e
Kuma, kuku, mowo,
O-e Mama-e
O-e-e-e-e-e-e-e-e . . .

This was a song of greeting for the Djadja spirit. Bayo still urged the rhythms out of the improvised apinti which he was playing. The drummers were calling all the Kromanti spirits, the buzzard called Opete, the jaguar, Tigri, and Djadja, the "devil." Would they come?

The question was answered soon enough. Out of the forest into the clearing ran one whose obia had come to him. It was Opete obia and, in his strength of possession, he had torn off two branches from a palm tree in the bush. These he held under his arms, so that, as he pranced about in his dance, he impersonated the awkwardness of the great carrion bird which gave its name to his obia. The tufts of palm leaves projecting from behind his flexed arms were wings. He leaped as in flight, then with startling rapidity he began turning round and round to the flapping of his wings.

Apanto suddenly seized a stick we held and, whirling it about our heads, was off to his dance, joining the six or

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seven men who were dancing the individual dances of their spirits. His dancing was unlike any we had seen on the river. There was a stealthy, effeminate grace in his movements, which produced a strange effect on the visitors. Suddenly it struck us—Apanto was one of those who had the dreaded Tigri! When he fought, he fought with his finger nails, not his fists, and when he danced, he danced with the feline grace of the tiger trailing his prey.

Suddenly the drums faltered. People near us cried out. Voices were heard.

"Bayo!"

"Bayo has gone into the bush!"

"Sound the drums to bring him back!"

In the silence of the moment, we could hear from the direction of the river the cries of our friend, now in the grip of obia. "*Hoi, hoi, koe! Obia! Hoi!*"

The lull in the drumming was only momentary, for instantly another man jumped for the makeshift drum, which Bayo had left, and the voice of the spirits once more rolled out. Ten, twelve men were whirling before us in their dance, and now more joined them, until it was impossible to remain seated, and we rose, and stood on guard.

More cries. These came from the village. Someone else had got obia.

A woman dashed up to us. "Run, white people, run! Come inside my house! Obia has come too soon! Obia is bad tonight! You will be hurt!"

As we shook our heads, she hurried to a near-by house, and we could hear the slam of the door and the sound of the wooden bolt as it was shot to. She had done what she could for the visitors. If they would stay, let them take the consequences.

Before us a creeping figure appeared, with eyes fixed upon us, his muscles tense, as if ready for a spring. The dancing men who were not yet possessed, closed in front of us. They held him as he crouched there, glaring. Those who restrained him called to the others.

"See to the guns!"

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his hold on the *babouka*. The child is finally allowed to re- 533
main. He can keep time well enough and that is what the *babouka* is for.

It is now night, jungle night. The tomtoms crash out in a full-throated chorus. It is a driving, compelling rhythm of hollow sounds. The timbre is heavy, hypnotic, maddening. The drummers achieve a difference of tone by striking near the edge, which gives a shrill sound, and then returning to the centre, which booms by contrast.

The effect of the drums may be a species of hypnosis. Hypnosis can be produced experimentally by the sound of rhythmical tapping, without any condition of sleep.

The patting of the fingers on the drum-head of dried skin 533
seems to induce in these primitives a type of hypnoid exalta- 151
tion. The cause of it is the monotonous, rhythmical repetition of booming sounds. Fatigue falls away. Memories of other evenings around the jungle fires come crowding back. They imagine that Apïku seizes their bodies. Demoniacal possession is a phenomenon well known to history; here we have it in the South American bush. Here it is called *winti*.

The hypnoid stimulus—monotonous repetition—is reproduced in the other instruments that accompany the tomtoms. The first of these is the *saka-saka*, a gourd struck on a handle and filled with pebbles. Then there is the *quaqua*, a [534]
flat board of resounding wood that is beaten with a hard paddle. Now the primitive orchestra is in full swing.

By this time the crowd has arranged itself in a circle, with 533
a bare space in the centre. The fires glow luridly on black 796

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faces. The drummers stop to tune to the desired pitch, driving in the pegs with the back edge of a bush-knife. Then they resume, rattling out a sharply insistent tempo. Women begin to sway. Some of them start a plaintive jungle song. The drums never stop.

A woman disengages herself from the crowd and enters the open space. She bends forward from the waist at a right angle. Her arms form a circle beyond her head, saffron palms outward. She sways from the hips, her torso contorted with sinuous suggestion. Then her feet on the bare earth rap out the tempo that the brown fingers of the men are drumming on the dried skin. The others begin patting juba.

It is a false start. The woman interrupts her dance to criticize the orchestra for not playing in her mood. The crowd is not yet possessed.

Dodo, the woman *basia*, or boss, goes about urging the women to begin. Meanwhile the bahkra slips through the crowd pouring out drinks of high wine to add to the dark hilarity of the occasion. Always before drinking they will spit on the ground a libation to the gods. A mother gives the rum to her seven-year-old child, who does not flinch from the burning potion.

A new tempo. Three little girls, slim in their nudity, enter the central space. The oldest is about eleven. They stand with their backs to us and begin the *bandamba* dance. The evening is on.

Standing still in the firelight, hands behind their heads, they arch their loins and raise their buttocks up and down.

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Shadows roll on the brown skin and quiver with the firelight. 796

It is a vivid picture, these naked girls standing still in the 535
flickering light of the fire, making their muscles dance to the monotony of the drums. Sweat breaks out on the foreheads of the drummers and runs down their faces, dropping off their chins unnoticed. The music grows louder and louder. 796
Apuku is coming. The stalwart black with the saka-saka 535
holds it at arm's length, braces his feet apart, and delivers his 153
whole body to the rhythm. The little girls, loath to stop, are seized by their proud mothers who rush out to embrace them, cheek to cheek. Others press forward with compliments for the excited girls. There is no stopping of the drums now. Louder and faster the metre becomes, a veritable pandemonium. No conversation or restrained observation is possible, due to the noise; the psychological effect is to wipe out the inhibitions of daily life and induce a state of semi-hysterical exhilaration. The white man, forgetting civilization for a time, feels like stamping his feet and shaking himself. And over all is the insistent monotony of the drums.

A woman has attached dried rattling nuts to her ankles, [334]
and enters the clearing to be swayed by the drums. She too bends her body at a right angle, palms outward, caressing invisible curves in time with the beat of the drums. Her torso writhes, in time to the beat of the drums. She would be crying aloud, were it not for the pulsation of the drums. Two other women come out and accompany her, then another, then more, until finally eight or nine are dancing in the

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79½ centre clearing, no longer caring, no longer entirely con-
535 scious, their bodies driven by the rhythm of the drums.
158 No man has yet danced. Now a young buck of nineteen jumps into the centre and begins the *awasa* dance. His movements simulate the flying of a hawk, arms out like wings, pirouetting gracefully. His bare feet stamp the earth, hard enough, it seems, to break his bones. Another man joins him, waving his arms at full length, like an eagle in flight. They chant in talkee-talkee an *awasa* song:

"Foowa mo luku bon nanga aiga."

[537] It means: The fowl must be careful of the hawk; in other words, the girls must be careful of the men. They circle from the waist like birds soaring into the blue.

79¾ Now a man begins dancing toward a woman. She re-
132 treats. No dancer has yet touched another, or even noticed another. But this one is making definite love advances to the woman. He mimics coitus. Coyly she evades his approaches, and will have none of his movements. They are not serious. When she definitely refuses his copulatory advances, the drums stop. He takes a drum from one of the men, puts it under his arm, and follows her, dancing around the clearing, beating out a message of love. They weave a pattern of movement, in and out, in this dance of courtship to the lone muttering tambour.

[302] There is a halt. The drummers rap out a message to other canoes coming up the river, telling them to hurry. Soon more strangers arrive for the final round.

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Then comes the *saramo* dance, accompanied by songs of the rebellion. Ancient heroes live again. Once more raids are made on outlying plantations. The spirit of defiance that Stedman found at Boucou is still kept alive. Then come softer songs—songs of love. "*Te e dormi e songs me, grandenke,*" a girl sings plaintively. She is telling her lover, "When you sleep, dream of me, many thanks." "*Te kai me u srai neseco, beran na bona soni e ta leyme*"—"When you lead me to deceit I will not follow; such things you should not teach me."

Again the dancers find fault with the orchestra, protesting loudly. They are not satisfied with the rhythm. Abruptly the chief dancer seizes a drum and rolls out a call to Apuku, god of the forest, asking Apuku to come.

Dimly through the darkness they can feel some response. Apuku is coming. Everyone runs back a few steps and utters a slight scream. The spirit of the bush god is entering their bodies. He is welcomed with a little dance, jerkily done, in which all participate. Then comes the special Apuku dance, where writhing, circling, snaking arms simulate the twisted lianas of the jungle, which is the god's home.

Once the spirit of the bush god has entered them, they cannot stop. The drums increase their volume and tempo, until the rhythm is too rapid and intricate for white ears to follow. Now truly they are hypnotized by the feverish monotony, the shuffling beat of fingers on the drum-heads. Because of this trance, fatigue is forgotten. The little *kabonda* keeps steady time, throbbing like a heart-beat. Flat hands

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796 shade out strange metres on the *sanda*. There is a break; the
535 orchestra stops, and the interval is filled in with the heavy
776 booming of the *apenti*. Often the drummers seize a bush-
158 knife and batter at the pegs, stretching the dried skin to the
[304] proper tone. Mist from the river has dampened their hair, unnoticed. The dance will continue until morning; they must play until the spirit of Apuku has gone.

796 Everything is set for the climax. Some are still watching
535 while the others dance. Since the old men are too dignified,
158 their places are taken by younger men from sixteen to twenty-five. There are more women dancing than men, anyhow. The white man is wondering how it is going to end. Despite the excitement there has been no orgiastic episode.

Grand finale. There is a tremendous screech from out of the blackness beyond. Three practically naked blacks come rushing up from the river, their faces and bodies daubed
[302] hideously with pemba doree, the ceremonial white clay. One has stripes around his arms, belly, and legs, his face all white. Another's face is bisected with white and yellow pigment. The third is Adjobo, the medicine man; he has circles of clay on his forehead, cheeks, and chin, and rings around his neck. The presence of the ceremonial clay indicates the presence of a god. There is no doubt but that the hideousness of these men inspires a feeling of awe.

They burst into the circle of dancers and scatter them. Everyone retreats before them, with actual or pretended fright. The children become hysterical and cling frantically to their mothers for protection. Women in the crowd are cry-

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ing. The vibrating tomtoms are pouring out a great volume of tangled sound. The three religious dancers whirl like furies. One dances with a wicked-looking machete; he makes it whistle through the air and brings it down with all his might into the ground between two drummers. They do not budge. A second dancer dashes into the bahkra's hut with his whirling bush-knife, hacking at everything in sight. The others seize him and overpower him, not before he has damaged many things with his vicious chops.

This ominous fury characterizes the hysterical possession of the *Cromanti* dance, the wild, mad dance of the evil spirit of the *con con dree*. The crowd keep clear of the chopping knives of the possessed men. They mutter unknown incantations in *odo*, making wild turns and gyrations. One falls on his knees to eat of the earth. Another bites the door of a hut like a dog. The third frees himself from a group of the struggling men who seek to restrain him, jumps into the rapids, swims against the great rush of water with feverish strength, and finally would drown were it not that his family rescues him with a canoe. There is nothing mystical about the extreme muscular endurance of such states; it can be produced experimentally in the laboratory.

The remaining obeiah dancers have a sham battle, fencing skilfully and dangerously with their bush-knives. First they stalk an imaginary enemy with poised machetes. Their muscular torsos held in strained attention would delight a sculptor. Picture a black, arms thrown out and head thrown back, eyes closed in frenzy, tense and foaming lips laying bare his

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796 535 158 clenched teeth, stamping the earth like an animal. Then two such blacks, with glazed eyes, slashing at each other with yard-long knives. This is the obeiah dance. Nothing can stop it until the dancers are exhausted and drop from sheer fatigue. Then the spirit of the god has fled.

796 535 Until that time, protesting is useless. It is useless for the bahkra to protest that he wants to go to sleep: *"Me wanny go seepy."* No attention is paid to that. It is dawn before the dancers finally stop. The visitors go down to the river to get in their corials. We light the dim path for them with a flashlight. They are grateful, and compose a little song of thanks. Even after the corials draw away from the bank, excited women get up in the boats and continue to dance, palms outward, hips high. It is no wonder that the marines in Haiti must confiscate the drums to keep the Negroes quiet. So long as the primitive holds to his intoxicating tom-toms, which manufacture courage automatically, he will never be a coward.

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so. In accordance with the voodoo ceremony, sacrifices of white chickens are occasionally offered to Papa Gadu, the snake god. Sacrifices are especially made to the large land and water boas. Human sacrifices, if they occur, are kept secret from all outsiders. We have no reason to believe in their occurrence. 825 778

A most interesting *Winti* dance was witnessed by Mr. Charles de Goeje, leader of the Dutch government expedition to the Tumac-Humac Mountains in 1908. This dance was for the purpose of propitiating the spirit of a snake which had been accidentally burned to death while a provision ground was being prepared for cultivation. 825 796

About 10 P. M., Mr. de Goeje relates, the drums began to play furiously. There were two apenti and one large ageedah drum. The people began to sing in an unusual manner, and the wife of one of the headmen, thickly smeared with pemba dotee, sat immovable as an image upon a carved wooden stool. After the drums had gone on for a while, there was heard the exclamation, *"Pour watra!"* A man came with a basin; he dipped a palm leaf in it and sprinkled the seated woman while the drums beat furiously. The woman seemed to awaken and began to turn around and around on her stool; she twisted and turned her body sometimes slowly, sometimes quickly. When she had reached a high pitch of excitement, she began to dance.

Several other women smeared with pemba dotee rose and took part in the dance. They danced around the long drum, gesturing as if the drum were speaking to them. They then

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embraced the drummers, streaking the men's heads with pemba dotee. A number of women in the audience also caught the spirit. One of them began to shake and convulse; when she awoke from her trance, she ran to her hut in the village. Another woman began to murmur as though in a dream. Still another one ran about among the assembly streaking and rubbing others with the sacred white clay. This dance continued until very late, and the whites, overcome by fatigue, were forced to retire.

The next morning at daybreak they again assembled. One of the women began to chant in a thin strange voice, and at 6 A. M. the dance started again. A couple ran dancing into the village clearing and smeared a man with pemba dotee; he also began to prance and became hysterical. This is known as *winti kiki,* or the transference of winti from one person to another. Several others, obtaining the spirit in the same way, began to dance. One man, after dancing a long while, ran around the clearing and finally fell flat on his face. He remained there until others carried him away. The man who had been playing the ageedah drum circled around with his drum between his legs like a hobby horse. Some of the women fell on their knees and continued to dance thus. One fell to the ground and beat the earth with her arms and legs. This ceremony ended at 10 A. M., after which the body of the snake, which had all this while been carefully guarded, was buried with great solemnity.

The dancing recommenced at four o'clock in the afternoon. The women went to a little Gadu house. One had a

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severe attack of winti. She fell upon her knees and appeared half lame. The others lifted her up. A youth came with a green stick; he bit into it and spat on the woman's calves, legs, feet, and arms. After a while she was able to stand alone. This seemed to constitute the end of the dance. It had somehow become known that the Papa Gadu, the snake spirit, was angry, and this big *gadu pray* (god's spread) had been necessary in order to propitiate him.

The women who are seized with the winti sometimes mutter a few words. The others regard these as the utterances of a spirit and say: *"Ya, gadu"*—"yes, God." Upon inquiry among the women who had caught the winti spirit, Mr. de Goeje found that they all complained of feeling very dizzy or giddy when in such a trance.

Certain localities, as well as individuals, may be possessed by evil spirits. The Pwaba Creek is such a place. Were a Djuka to go up this creek with any clothing on, he would never come out alive. So upon entering the waters of Pwaba the Djuka strips off all his clothes. That nullifies the bad magic.

Every Bush Negro, to protect himself from all varieties of black magic, wears a number of charms or amulets. He

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The decoration of
177 objects with cowrie shells comes by way of Africa. The
[329] monkey dance said to be practised by the Djukas is described
[796] as similar to the gorilla dance of the West Coast. The coiled wire bracelets and anklets are of African design, and the
[301 291] general mode of dress is the same.

The Djuka attitude toward the silk-cotton tree is common among the tribes of the Guinea Coast. "Throughout West
[824] Africa from Senegal to the Niger the silk-cotton tree is regarded with reverence and believed to be the abode of a god or spirit. This general consensus of opinion is no doubt due to the stupendous size attained by some of these trees, which tower far above all others of the forest."

[524] *Adji-boto,* a game in which seeds are placed in round holes in a board, is played not only by the Bush Negroes but also by the Town Negroes of Paramaribo; it is found along the Gold Coast, Benin, Sierra Leone, West Sudan, and, in modified forms, in many other parts of Africa. The fish spear
[227] of the Djukas is found in Liberia, Mandingo, and the Gold Coast. Shooting fish with a bow and arrow is an African
[224] custom, but it is also widespread among the aboriginal Indians of South America. On the other hand, according to Dr. W. Roth of Demerara, a number of traps and hunting devices now used by the Guiana Indians are of African origin and have been borrowed from the Negroes.

[372] The Djuka fire fan, woven of split rattan, is borrowed from the Arawak Indians, but different types of the same device can be found also among the Tshi- and Ewe-speaking people and in Liberia, Cameroons, etc. The Bush Negro

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obeiahs, house gods, fetish houses, menstrual huts, and matrilineal system of inheritance are all to be found as ancient customs among the forest tribes of the West Coast. Other details, such as the use of chickens for sacrificial animals, the huts with their rectangular walls, the manufacture of butter from the palm worm, the sacredness of snakes and alligators, the use of drums for religious supplication, and the beating of them with the hand instead of with a stick as the Indians do, are also customs which are similar to West African customs and probably derived from them. The impaled turtle-shell on a staff, the badge of the witch doctor's profession, represents the symbol for the female genitalia among some West African tribes. The Bush Negroes' boats and paddles are typically African in design. The *awasa* dance of the Saramaccaners was borrowed from the Aucaners, among whom it is a direct West African survival.

From the study of these culture survivals among the Djuka tribes it can be seen that most of the jungle civilization of the Bush Negroes is derived from their West African ancestry, modified here and there by contact with the Indians of their new home. The remainder of the material culture of the Bush Negroes is borrowed from the white settlements along the coast, from which gunpowder, fish-hooks, bush-knives, and other articles filter upstream.

[p. 192 is blank]

/11 cont./

252 They always prepare their food with much native pepper (5)

5. All Capsicum species.

and in their soup or blaf cook various forest greens (6), which they

6. Kraroe, kalalve from the Amarantus oleraceus, taja leaves from an Arum species.

then eat with finely pounded bananas (called afoefoe) or else with cassava bread or rice dipped into it.

412 They make their spoons from a long strip of the calabash rind.

262 They are great lovers of pinda (7), a kind of groundnut, from

7. Arachis hypogoea L.

which they make various delicacies.

[439] They are particularly fond of bacon and buy it whenever they are in town, salted and smoked; they frequently take barrels of it with them into the bush and are very sparing with it.

/12/ They buy flour or meal only when they have had a bad rice harvest.

273 As drink they use rum or dram, and sometimes they make

[439] from the juice of the sugar cane, which they acquire on plantations, a kind of fermented drink which they use especially at festivals. They prefer gin and beer to wine, of which they are no great lovers. The women are very fond of liqueur.

276 Many men and women smoke American tobacco in short clay pipes. The taking of snuff is a passionate habit among some.

Chapter VIII

Festivals, Games, Gods

● 796

273 They do not have fixed times for the veneration of their gods, and they do this only then when they are amply supplied with strong drink and want to have a gay time for three or four days.

/12 cont./

796 Then they call all the neighbors together to take part in the
273 festivities to be held, which consist of invoking their gods amidst continuous dancing and excessive drinking.

They begin the festivities only on a Friday and usually finish on a Sunday or Monday, depending on the larger or smaller
[147] supply of drink, so, lacking this, the festival ends. After the conclusion they are usually extremely tired and listless and give themselves up entirely to rest for at least two or three days.

It is a definite requirement at these festivities to be very amply supplied with strong drink, because one must drink without
[782] interruption in order to remain in a continuous narcosis. With each drink they first pour a little on the ground, -- so that it, too, on which they find themselves so gay, may participate in their enjoyment.

[262] The merrymakers then take care that they will by no means
[577] be lacking in fish, wild game, bacon, rice, etc., since it is a matter of honor with them to display the most lavish hospitality on such occasions.

776 The gods that they worship are:

Loango Gado,
Papa Gado,
Cromantie Gado,

/13/ names certainly derived from the various African tribes of these names.

In the first two they glorify nature and everything created, from which it therefore appears that these are merely subordinate
[787] gods of the unnamed, single great spirit. The last is above all regarded by them as the mediator who transmits their wishes to the great spirit; he is invoked especially at burial ceremonies and for consultation in connection with serious illnesses.

796 They do not have any other cult or religion, so far as I was
[771] able to discover, but only the fixed habit of still celebrating to-
[132] gether and with their chief and captains on the first Friday of the new moon in the month of October or November, after the long
[783] dry period has set in for good, a great feast [illegible] goal a general atonement, to cleanse them of the misdeeds that they have committed.

796 /13 cont./
[782] committed. This feast, at which pigs and poultry are sacrificed, must last for four weeks and thus ends with the following new moon. They pray, dancing and singing, while from time to time they kneel in order to ask for blessings.

[778] In the place where their idol stands they plant long sticks in the ground at certain intervals, on which they let flutter a number of long narrow strips of white cotton in the manner of flags.

[781] They celebrate this feast, for which no costs are spared, with all possible solemnity; it is attended by old and young and is very important among them.

Chapter IX

Conceptions about Death and Eternity

775 They believe that at death the existence of the human being ends, but that the spirit of the deceased does not disappear altogether and remains among them for a long time. Also they believe in unlucky spirits, which, as a result of an earlier evil life, must wander about restlessly, while the life on earth of the peaceful spirits is supposed to have been free of misdeeds.

They do not assume rewards in the hereafter for good deeds; /14/ misdeeds, however, in their opinion, are punished with restless wandering about.

[755] They say that those spirits know all that happens, and that they can come in contact with them at their feasts, that they receive many a hint and information, and through concealed signs come to know remedies against diseases, to which they attach the fullest confidence.

Chapter X

Marriage and Marital Life

584 Their marriages take place with few ceremonies. Frequently young men and even men ask pregnant women, in case they should bring a daughter into the world, to designate that girl as their wife,

614 /31 cont./
769 Another very important principle in the minds of the Refugee
•796 Blacks is that prayers must be collective; the principal ceremonies,
613 such as the New Year's prayer, must bring together, at least in principle, the total lineage.

These notions certainly have influenced the custom of the
182 Refugee Blacks with respect to residence and marriage. The lineage
613 cannot allow the permanent departure of a woman from her native
614 country any more than that of a man. In the populations of Black
591 Africa with matrilineal filiation, this conception is reconciled
[171] with the necessities of practical living in the following manner: the wife leaves her relatives to settle down with her husband, but when her children reach adulthood they must return there. Thus one cannot attribute to this preoccupation alone the special system of marriage among the Refugee Blacks, which does not involve the permanent cohabitation of man and wife. We shall see that this system was inspired by social and psychological necessities. But concern for the unity of the lineage, to which it corresponds perfectly, has surely contributed to make of it a rigorous principle of customary law.

601 Kinship within the matrilineage. The kinship terms translate a
613 purely classificatory system. It depends only on the number of
611 generations separating from the foundress. The sons of women descended from the foundress in uterine line are regarded as members of the matrilineage and united in the system of appellation. The children of these men are no longer part of the matrilineage.

/259 cont./

771 [782] to the god, and their words of thanks lasted scarcely half a minute (1). At the time of our first trip on the Maruini, in

1. Yet custom expressly provides for this rite of thanking.

1948, the same scenes had unfolded, going as well as coming back.

241 771

Rites Relative to Agriculture

These rites occupy a relatively minor place in the religious life of the Refugee Blacks, which may be attributed to the great regularity of the climate and the absence of calamities affecting the yield of crops.

[613] It does not seem, at least among the Boni, that a religious bond is assumed between the lineage and the land, and rites intended to insure the fertility of the soil are carried out by each one for himself in the neighborhood of his own field; the lineage head does not appear to play any particular role in this regard. In the thought of the Boni, the fertility of the soil depends upon a local divinity, to which is offered de facto worship; the temporary or permanent users of the lands situated in the domain of this god perform on their own behalf the rites of this worship without any distinction of origin, whether they are Boni, Djuka, or Saramaka.

241 776

[796] [793] [643] The only collective worship existing in Boni country is the worship of mama $g_2\tilde{5}$, of which the grand man is priest. Its rites are limited to a short annual prayer.

/259 cont./

Cult of Mama gɔ̃. Mama gɔ̃, mother of the earth, is represented by a crude statue of white clay provided with enormous breasts, symbol of fecundity, which can be seen in a little hut situated on the open place of Boniville village. Each year, when the time for cutting the clearings approaches, the grand man, surrounded by many other people, prays to the god to grant fertility to the plantings. If rain does not fall, an offering of water and tafia is made and the statue is sprinkled.

The Boni do not appear to associate the idea of women's fecundity with that of the fertility of the soil, and we have not heard anyone say that the grand man prays on this subject.

Neither do they appear to have a very clear idea about the relationships of this worship with that of the gɔ̃ gadu, local gods of the soil.

Every three years a great possession dance takes place in Boniville on January 1, /260/ in which the Papa gadu gods dance in front of the sanctuary of Mama gɔ̃. We have not been able to obtain specific information on the meaning of this rite.

Cult of the gɔ̃ gadu. It is assumed that every portion of land is under the sway of a local god, gɔ̃ gadu. Its power is limited only by the fertility of the soil, and he who neglects its worship cannot be attacked in his person or in his goods, but only punished by a poor harvest.

What is the nature of these gods, what is their place in the cosmogony? These are questions which not one of our informants had ever asked himself. In their minds, gɔ̃ gadu has a de facto existence, and is rendered de facto worship. This worship consists essentially of:

--Offerings made at the moment of planting;

--The observance of a local day of rest, kina dɛ, corresponding to the god's day of rest.

765 /263 cont./ He will go to the spot, following
782 at a good distance M..., bearer of the remedy, with which he will sprinkle the surface of the clearing, and of offering objects. When the offering has been made, they will wait some time to see whether Masauman is better and if she is, they will deem the god appeased.

796

The Yali Festival

[805] The Refugee Blacks, who do not count the days that elapse, contenting themselves with lunations in order to follow the course of the year, make inquiries from Europeans and Creoles to set the time for the Yali festival which marks the new year. Everyone accumulates provisions, especially tortoise meat, varied drinks, and many firecrackers.

On the evening of December 31 each one dances in his own village.

The festival lasts all night, tafia gushes forth, firecrackers go off everywhere.

[787] At the end of the night several gods "rise" in the heads of their bearers, at least of those who are not completely drunk.

[535] During the day dances resume intermittently in the order awasa, sɔŋgɛ, susa. It is customary for the people of one lineage to go to dance in the village of another, then they [574] invite them back. People make many individual visits. Some have set up in front of their hut a sort of small buffet on which they have arranged about ten glasses, five to six liters of tafia, four or five bottles of beer, lemonade, and syrup.

Observation in Boniville, January 1, 1958:

The grand man, who scarcely leaves his habitation downstream from Boniville any more, did not /264/ put himself out. He delegated his functions to Lébiman and Fintiman, men about 50 years old, belonging to the fraction of the Kotika and Dju lineages residing in Boniville.

/264 cont./

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[126]

At seven o'clock, about ten men assemble at the fraga tiki. They pour water first, then tafia, while uttering the prayer whose whole text follows, taken from a tape recording:

Fintiman (pouring the water):

"Ancestors, hail! We have come to you; it is for the new year that we have come to you! as you yourselves used to do when you were (alive). May God protect us until the new year comes back again; thus it is that you yourselves used to pour the water on behalf of the ancestors. We have come to our place of prayer to speak with you, to ask you to carry our words to God."

(The same formulas are repeated several times.)

Lébiman:

"This is the New Year's Day water. It is God's day. He has arrived. Grand man Awensay (1), (because) I have

1. Predecessor of Grand Man Difu, who died in 1936. In each village the last dead head is invoked by name in order to ask him to call the more ancient dead.

not known the more distant ancestors, it is you alone that I call; call all the others."

"It has arrived, God's day. As for the grand man himself, a slight hindrance has come to him, he could not come, but it is not that he is no longer interested in the village."

"Watch over all the people who are there... we have come to pour water on your behalf, so that you will watch over the chickens and dogs of the village (and up to the living men) (2). Protect the grand man; if misfortune was about to

2. Usual prayer formula.

/264 cont./

796 happen to him, may it pass to one side. Thus we have come
769 to pour (the water) to beg you to protect the village. The year
539 has changed today, it is a new year. May we have money and food, we beg of you, ancestors; watch over our plantings, may they prosper, may the young women who fish at the wharf catch fish."

"All the captains pour (the water), the fiskal, the majors pour (3) for all the lineages; protect the villages."

[184]
[622]

3. Honorific titles imitated from the Djuka but which, among the Boni, do not really mean anything; the head of Kormotibo village bears the title fiskal and the one of Kotika village the title major.

Fintiman:

"The people who have pure hearts, protect them, big and small. But the people whose hearts are not good, who do evil spells to kill others and decrease the village, we do not pray for them; turn them out."

"Watch over the grand man; if something happens to him, it must not be said that we, the people who are seated there, have not prayed well. Great ancestors, we supplicate you, if we were on the point of meeting misfortune, that we may find the good."

(They begin to pour the tafia.)

/265/ "Grand Man Awemsay ...." (Thanks follow for a trip which was carried out without hindrance.)

Lébiman:

"May the grand man live long with us, may misfortune not happen to him."

/265 cont./

796 769 539 "Great ancestors who are in God's country, it is you who have the strength of the village."

(The tafia gushes forth.)

"Drink, drink, but do not get drunk to the point of being deluded, look with favor upon the righteous, scatter the wicked."

796 782 Next, Fintiman goes off to make an offering of tafia accompanied by a few words at the chapel of Odun. Then he goes to the edge of the mortuary shed to pour water, tafia, and coffee on behalf of Samalobi, the grand man's brother, for whom mourning has not been lifted.

He goes next to the house of the deceased grand man Awensay to make an offering of coffee (Awensay, like the other grand men, used to drink coffee).

796 782 829 The prayer of the preceding year (January 1, 1957), presided over by grandfather Samalobi, had had a higher inspiration. After praying in about the same terms as above for the Boni, they prayed for the Djuka, explaining that in days gone by Boni and Djuka had fought, but that all that was forgotten. They prayed next for the Saramaka, then for the Indians, finally for the Europeans. I asked why; they answered: "It is because the Europeans were the ones who brought us to this country which has become ours." /p. 266 is blank/

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CHAPTER VIII

538 765

TALES -- PROVERBS

Tales (Anɲsi tɔli) and Proverbs (ɔdo) retain an important social function among the Refugee Blacks. It is always by tales that the great customary ceremonies of the lifting of mourning begin. Their function is to concentrate the attention of the